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TUESDAY
January 20, 1959
4:37 p.m.

TELEPHONE CALL TO THE PRESIDENT

The Sec said he just had a letter from Caccia saying that Macmillan and Lloyd want to go to Russia and it would ostensibly be to return the visit of B&K. He read from it. Of course, said the Sec, he is campaigning and the Sec is sure he wants to be the fellow who solves this Berlin crisis etc. Caccia says he hopes that he can get the Sec's reactions tomorrow at 3:30. The Sec wanted to put the thought in the Pres' mind and maybe after dinner they could speak of it. It is hard to say no. The Pres does not give much of a ----, does the Sec? The Pres' shotgun reaction is let him go if he is that good. The Sec would have preferred to see us work at the problem, and we may have to do it in the end. The Pres said that can't be the ostensible purpose because that would be a slap in the face for France and Germany. We can only say he can call there but he can't speak for us. And the Sec said he can't for the French or Germans. The Pres agreed. The Pres said they would talk again but he does not think they will make any big dents in the granite but how they expect to get out in the open.... if they get a concession afterwards then here at home they can say we were not very smart. The British had to do it but the Pres thinks they will come back with their tails between their legs ~~xxxxxxxx~~ and then we are smart fellows. The Sec read on re other visits. The Pres does not think it is a good move but.... The Sec does not have in mind that the time is ripe yet to break the situation. until we have made our own plans and are pretty solid and have

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reached near the end of 6 months as he does not think they will give in. They will see what we are going to do - crack or weaken. The Sec is afraid they may interpret it as a sign of weakness. The Pres asked when the next Br election will be. The Sec said they think this year. The Pres was surprised. The Sec said Macmillan's stock was up two or three months ago but it has been going down and today he would have perhaps no more than a 50-50 chance if that much. The Sec said the PM fixes the date and gives no indication of when but they guess it will be this fall. The Pres said there is this virtue - his going away, no one can pretend he speaks for the Four but if we do they can say we are trying to. Each will think about it and perhaps have a word or two tonight.

pdb